

Mr. BLUMENAUER. I am sorry, Mr. Speaker?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time has expired.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I had yielded the gentleman 2 of 3 of my minutes.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Apparently he used more than the 2 minutes. I am sorry if there is a misunderstanding, but the hour is up.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I would ask unanimous consent for 30 seconds.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. I would advise the gentleman that a unanimous consent is not acceptable under a special order for additional time.

TAXATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER).

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the courtesy of the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN). I am sorry, but I thought the Chair would notify me when the time had expired. I apologize.

Mr. Speaker, the Vice President has sometimes been accused of being sort of robotic and wooden. In fact, he has joked about it himself. But there is one thing that that man is passionate about. It is the environment. When I look at the dismal record in the State of Texas with the air quality deteriorating, I look for the passion and the commitment from the governor of that State, but I do not see it. I think there is a huge difference between the two, and I hope that the American public will have the opportunity in the remaining 3½ weeks to focus on this.

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to address yesterday's debate and focus on taxation. Why such a dry topic as taxation? After all, one of the candidates seems like a much nicer, more likeable guy. Why do we not just make him President by acclamation? Well, it seems that running the Federal Government is a little bit more complicated than just being a nice and congenial individual.

First, let us talk about the cause for our prosperity. We have the longest expansion in this country's history. It has lasted so long some people take it for granted, but we should not because it arises from the combination of two very important causes; one of which is the ingenuity, the hard work and the inventiveness of the American people working in the private sector. But let us remember, Americans worked hard in the early 1980s, the late 1980s, and the early 1990s; but not until the mid-1990s did our prosperity begin to bear fruit.

Why is that? Because only then was it combined with the other essential element: Federal fiscal responsibility. Responsibility at the Federal level is something this administration achieved when most of us thought it was impossible, and in doing so they have given us lower interest rates, available capital for the private sector, and a lower inflation rate.

The governor of Texas would have us put this all at risk for \$1.5 trillion of tax cuts, nearly half of which goes to the richest 1 percent of Americans; plus another \$1 trillion in unstated costs as the cost of shifting from our present Social Security system to this new Social Security system he promises with individual accounts funded by a trillion dollars that no one mentions.

Let us talk about taxes. There are basically three taxes that support the Federal Government: the estate tax, which falls chiefly on the richest 1.5 percent of Americans; the income tax which is paid by everyone except the poor; and the FICA tax, the payroll tax that is borne by the poor and the middle class and has only a tiny effect on the rich.

The governor said last night, I believe everyone who pays taxes ought to get relief; but what he did not mention was that there are over 15 million Americans who pay that FICA tax, that payroll tax, and do not pay an income tax and do not get a penny of relief under his program. There are, in fact, 30 million Americans who pay a FICA tax with no net income tax liability, and over half of them, 15 million Americans, pay a net FICA tax even adjusted for the earned income tax credit which they receive; 15 million Americans that the governor from Texas cannot see apparently because they are poor. They are the janitors; they are the men and women who pick up at restaurants; they are people working hard every day to support families on incomes of \$10,000 or \$15,000 and they do not get a penny. But 43 percent of George Bush's tax benefits go to the top 1 percent of Americans; and that is more than he spends on health, Medicare, education and the military.

Last night, Governor Bush told us that only \$223 billion goes to the richest 1 percent. He is right, if we only look at the income tax. But if we look at the estate tax, we see another \$500 billion going to the wealthiest 1 to 1½ percent of Americans. So we look at the estate tax and the income tax combined and we see roughly \$700 billion going to the wealthiest Americans.

But Mr. Bush cannot see half a trillion dollars in tax reduction, cannot notice it and denies that it exists because, after all, it is estate tax relief for the very wealthiest Americans. He cannot see 15 million poor Americans. He cannot see half a trillion dollars going to the wealthy. I think we could

only describe this as fuzzy fiscal facts; and we need instead, as our President, someone who will provide tax relief to working Americans and preserve our fiscal responsibility.

TRIBUTE TO CONGRESSMAN TOM BLILEY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. Speaker, before I get on with the business at hand, I would like to make some comments about the hour or so that we have just heard of facts that just simply do not bear up under the reality of what has happened in Texas in the last few years.

Since 1995, Texas has led the country in reducing the release of disposal of toxic pollution and has led it by 43 million pounds of reduction.

Since 1994, industrial air emissions in Texas have fallen by 11 percent. The EPA says that that is the fact. Under legislation signed by Governor Bush, Texas became the third State in the Nation to require pollution reductions and permits from grandfathered utilities, utilities that would not have had to meet these new standards. Governor Bush said they would have to meet these new standards. Under that plan, they will reduce nitrogen oxide pollution by 50 percent and sulfur dioxide emissions by 25 percent by 2003. Governor Bush has been praised for his leadership in requiring air pollution reductions from these utilities, and the record is clear on that.

The Wall Street Journal in September of this year said that no one in the Clinton administration has been willing to face this issue separately.

I think what we see happening on the floor is a willingness to distort the facts. We see a willingness to talk about an America that Americans would not want to see happen in our country in terms of the kinds of solutions that have been proposed, but even those solutions, the gentleman from California talking to the gentleman from Oregon a minute ago, talking about electric cars, said that all this could be done today. Well, if it could have been done today, why has it not been done for the last 8 years? That was maybe the greatest condemnation of the point they were trying to make that was made on the floor today, but that is not the purpose of our order here tonight.

The purpose of the order tonight is to talk about the 5 decades of service of the chairman of the Committee on Commerce, the oldest committee in the House, a committee that has such jurisdiction that approximately half of all the legislation that comes to the